

[Town Life]

is very rough, though strong. Most of the men complain about it, for it cuts their hands when they are fishing and the action of salt water on the cuts inflames their hands badly. 227

There are between seventy-five and one hundred canoes in Vila Recôncavo, of all sizes, from 16 to about 50 feet long. They come from the southern part of the state, and cost between Cr\$1,000,00 and Cr\$6,000,00 apiece, depending on their size. They are made of vinhatico preto, a large tree from which an entire canoe can be hollowed out. As the canoes grow older, they are strengthened inside by the addition of ribs. The center support (pé do banco) has a hole in it through which a mast can be stepped for sailing. The fishermen use a variety of sails, but usually a simple square sail called traquete. Four flour sacks sewn together make a passable square sail. The canoes last a long time and are handed down from generation to generation. A hundred years is not an uncommon age for such a craft. 501 (313) (428)

The majority of fishermen cannot swim well and have a great respect for the water on two counts: the water is deep, which to them implies danger, and it is said to hide large, man-eating fish. There are stories of three men who have disappeared in the last few years, snatched away by fish. One was a baixador, and the other two fell overboard. Falling is not uncommon, for often a man steps on a small fish on the bottom of the canoe or simply slips on the wet wood, loses his balance, and goes overboard, as the canoes are narrow-beamed and unstable. In their canoes they are fearless, and will go anywhere in any weather. Severe storms which arise suddenly are ridden out in the canoe, which generally lies at anchor while the men lie under cover of the sail, peering out occasionally to see if the weather is clearing. Many of them, however, become violently ill on a larger boat during a storm. 501 226 (481) (P25) (164)

Winter is the most productive season for fishing, although the most uncomfortable. There are many storms, and the rains are more or less constant. But the fishermen say that the mixture of salt water with the fresh water from small rivers emptying into the bay seems to produce many more fish than in the summer months. The fishermen dress only in a pair of shorts and a straw hat when fishing, and remain in the cold rain for hours on end. Colds are common among them, as is rheumatism among the older men. 226 (221) (132) (291) (164)

There is always a market for fish. There is a discussion currently going on in Vila Recôncavo, for some of the older 226 43

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Class C Families]

165
[217] The civil register for the community of Vila Recôncavo listed 111 deaths for 1950, fifty-one male and sixty female. The age breakdown was as follows:

TABLE 9
NUMBER OF DEATHS BY AGE GROUPS, 1950

under 1 year	36
1- 4	20
5- 9	1
10-14	4
15-19	4
20-29	10
30-39	10
40-49	6
50-59	9
60-69	4
70-79	3
80-89	1
90-99	2
over 99	1
	111

165
• 164 It is apparent that the first five years are those in which the death rate is highest. According to the local doctor's records, the most frequent causes of these deaths are diarrhea and enteritis (seven deaths), whooping cough (seven deaths), chronic nephritis (five deaths), and acute bronchitis (four deaths). The mal de sete dias (literally, "illness of seven days," an umbilical infection in newly born infants) was the cause of only two deaths, and only one natural abortion was registered, as well as one stillbirth. According to the same doctor, many more adults die of heart trouble and kidney ailments than of anything else.

553
[214] The most popular method of naming children is by choosing from an almanac a name which strikes the fancy of the parents. In Brazil many commercial concerns publish yearly almanacs which are widely distributed. In addition to giving national holidays, saints' days, and various other kinds of calendars, they include lists of names, often of saints. While in the upper classes children are named after their parents and grandparents, lower-class families give their offspring all sorts of exotic names chosen from the almanacs, such as Estanislau, Enoch, or Ignace. Sometimes the name is cho-

551
553

249
[464]

[241]

[465]

[461]

249
466

• [164]

466

249

472

[473]

[162]

sugar workers move rarely, remaining for generations on the same plantation. Each family has its garden where a little maize, beans and manioc are grown. Pay day comes every two weeks, when as a rule the worker goes to the owner's house to receive his money. The pay is small, 15 to 25 dollars a fortnight, depending on how much the man has worked during the period. Men do not like to work more than five to six hours a day, from six a.m. to twelve noon, and seldom work more than five days a week. They work easily, without hurry. In the afternoon they work in their garden, if their wives have not already done so. On the plantation no one starves; everyone has his *patrão* (protector) in the person of the owner, and in case of an emergency, accident or sickness, he expects help from him. This personal element is very important on most plantations in the vicinity of Vila Recôncavo; as a rule, the owner knows all the workers by name, knows their families and their family troubles and problems. He is aware of their love affairs and up-to-date on the health of new-born children and their mothers. Nearly all cases of sickness, from common colds and rheumatism to more serious ailments, are brought directly to the attention of the *patrão* or his wife. The owner, returning from a prolonged stay in the city, receives visits from the workers or from their wives, during which all the personal gossip is exchanged. The workers inquire about the owner's family and more extended family, for they generally know them all. Engagements, weddings, births, deaths and illnesses are reported on both sides. Complaints or requests are also made to the owner. The relationship is highly personal, intimate, gentle and frank.

On one rather small *usina*, which will be called São Pedro, in the rural zone of Vila Recôncavo, the situation is somewhat different. São Pedro is not one of the large *usinas* of the Recôncavo, owned by a corporation; it is relatively small and owned by one of the most important families of the Vila Recôncavo community, members of the regional aristocracy whose family has held plantations there for many generations. Because the owners of the *usina* actually administrate it, and since they are in residence in the locality at least part of the year, they are able to maintain many of the traditional personal relations with their employees, many of whom have worked on the plantations belonging to their family and in the *usina* for most of their lives. But there is a total of 1,183 workers and their families at the *usina* and on the plantations belonging to São Pedro, and the very size of the enterprise and the number of workers make for a more impersonal and more strictly economic relationship between employer and employee. Workers become more a name on a payroll, and the employer a person with whom one seldom has direct contact. In the larger *usinas* of the Recôncavo this trend is even more marked especially where the employer is a large corporation with offices in Salvador.

BRAZIL SLI

BB

433

38

NEGROES IN BRAZIL

567

175

B

BB

175

567

● [164]

to live together because they mutually support one another. Similarly, different racial stocks often occupy to mutual advantage the same habitat because each fits into a different niche in an interdependent symbiotic order. The fundamental problem is that of survival. The Portuguese at Bahia to a considerable extent resolved this problem by the development of an economy based upon plantation agriculture and slave labor.

A considerable number of Negroes died while being transported from Africa. Others subsequently perished from the ravages of cholera, yellow fever, and other epidemics. A few committed suicide or led religiously motivated uprisings against their masters. But the major portion were readily incorporated into the plantation system. Centuries of familiarity with the slave tradition of their African cultures and, in many cases, familiarity with the slave status itself probably made their adjustment to a slave system in the new land less difficult.

BB

175

567

464

B

BB

175

567

[357]

[462]

Most of the Negroes entering and remaining in the vicinity of Bahia were employed in the planting, cultivation, harvesting, processing, and marketing of sugar cane and tobacco. A limited number were engaged in cattle-raising. They also supplied the necessary artisan and domestic labor on the plantations.

Within the city of Bahia itself, as in other Brazilian ports, most of the slaves were engaged in domestic service. However, in addition, a modified form of slavery existed. Many blacks, known as *negros de ganho*, were employed as porters, stevedores, ironworkers, masons, carpenters, carriage- and cabinet-makers, printers, sign and ornamental painters, silversmiths, lithographers, sculptors in wood and stone, small shopkeepers, street merchants, etc. They were semi-inde-

*

563

grew up during slavery, and no circumstance has subsequently arisen to change it. In the United States, on the other hand, the spread of contraceptive practices³⁵ and the increasing race consciousness of the Negro have led to a decided decrease in miscegenation. Traditional behavior in Bahia is, in this respect as in many others, well defined. The sanction of custom has become, as it always does eventually in any case, moral sanction.

*

563

583

Race mixture is further favored in Bahia today by the widespread custom of *mancebia*,³⁶ or those conjugal unions outside marriage in which there is some degree of permanency. In many cases the women involved are mulattoes, rarely blacks. The man agrees to pay for rent and food; the woman, to care for the house and children. The man may have, at the same time, a legal family, although informal unions are often entered into by young men previous to marriage.

*

563

826

Miscegenation is also favored in Bahia today by the prestige which ordinarily attaches to the so-called "whiter" child. Dark mothers who bear "whiter" children consider themselves especially favored and are so looked upon by their immediate associates. A black mother proudly showed her light child and said, "Estou limpando a minha raça" ("I am cleansing [i.e., I am 'whitening'] my race"). One also

●

[164]

[554]

[882]

³⁵ In Bahia there is not the fear of venereal disease common to this country. Its contraction is regarded by young men as an indication of sexual coming-of-age and perhaps enhances their prestige among their associates (cf. Freyre, *op. cit.*, pp. 40 ff.).

[193]

[192]

³⁶ This term is used only in more polite conversation. The woman involved is called *manceba*, the verb is *mancebar*, and the participle *mancebado*. The popular expression, however, is *amasia*, or *amiga* (the feminine form of "friend"), or *amante*, or *comboso*, for the woman; the verb is *amasiar* or *amigar*, the participle *amasiado* or *amigado*.